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## FOREWORD

*"Truth for Authority, not Authority for Truth"*

CHARLES HENRY DAVIS

President, National Highways Association

SOCIETY has, for centuries, manufactured more criminals than human nature of its own accord produces. The more fortunate, but not necessarily less criminal, have, almost universally, cruelly punished those less fortunate brothers caught in their so-called crimes. Correction, instruction, forgiveness, kindness have played but a small part in dealing with the "criminal" or "convict." Would that we might call him by a kindlier name! For many of us now think and talk of him as of a different breed, forgetting that he is, after all, a man. We cry out against slavery, yet legalize it for tens of thousands. We scorn revenge, yet mete out vengeance in the name of the law. We remove from society offenders against society and forcibly detain them, for years, in surroundings as much unlike real society as is possible. We then once more thrust them upon society untaught, revengeful, weak, broken in mind and body, and wonder why they fall again! Why should they not? Has not society done its utmost to prevent their rise? And yet society places the responsibility upon these poor unfortunate beings! Most of them are mentally deficient and should have our care and help—not our contempt. Many of them have been sorely tempted without ability to run from temptation. And all of us must run! Some have led honorable and useful lives and would continue to do so did society have the forbearance and forgiveness of the parent towards the child. And society should have such forgiveness and thus restore men to society and not brand them as criminals. Our modern prisons are barbaric. They typify the medieval prisons, so loathsome to our imagination, and yet we call them modern. They are

not. They still hold men in abject slavery, in idleness worse than death. Without sun. Sometimes without light. With foul air and fouler companions. Does this treatment, even of the convict, produce repentance? No, a thousand times no! Revenge, insanity, more crime are the inevitable results.

As in many other activities, our laws and their administration are fifty years behind the times. Once there, how many of us could resist the debauching influences? How many of us could resist the degrading example of those associates more steeped in crime and hardened by their previous contact with still earlier criminals? How many of us could return to the life outside without a feeling of bitterness, or resentment, against our whole social structure? We have abolished negro slavery, a paradise to that of criminal slavery. We maintain institutions little better than the torture chambers of ancient times. They are not designed for reform, tuition, enlightenment. They offer little incentive to right living, high ideals. They are not places where erring humanity may be schooled and trained to become good citizens. They are more fit to drag and trample down into the mire the poor unfortunates sent there for their "first offense." There, even plant life does not exist. The grass, the plants, the flowers, the trees do not grow within their yards. How much less does man! Could there be greater shame to our nation than thus to cling to the ancient custom of depriving men of their freedom, shutting them up within four walls, leaving them to their fate? "Men are but children of a larger growth." But do we treat our children in this wise? Do we not believe in pointing out to them and making attractive and possible the road to virtue? Do we rather enslave and chastise them unmercifully for having failed to find it out themselves? We used to when parents held the lives of their children in their hands! The state now so holds the lives of its citizens. When shall we take such power away? In our criminal procedure we now have the spirit of punishment, cruelty, unkindness, physical force, slavery, confinement, isolation, darkness, silence and all the resultant evils thereof, resistance, revenge, sullenness, depravity, hopelessness, insanity.

We should turn on the light; we should give men the sunshine, the free air and fields of the country. We should have, and thus give, hope, faith, help. We should correct, not punish. We should be kind and square and our "pals" will respond most wonderfully. Children are not controlled by physical force. Deliberate, low-voiced, firm kindness and square doing gain their obedience. So it is with their larger brothers. What results to be attained by such a change—change in our moral acknowledgment of the wrongs we have done to the convict! We have been too long blind to this wrong thinking and doing. We have had too much pride, too little charity. We have admired too long the public prosecutor. We have delayed too long the coming of the public defender.

How can we do all this? We must do something with those who violate the rules. Yes! But that something should be to help them not to break the rules again. Temporary exile, into a temporary society as nearly as possible like the one they left, would seem the best solution. They would thus be learning to play the game according to the rules. Responsibility, during their temporary exile, would increase the desire to play so well, so fairly, that they could go back from whence they came. To do this we must get them "Back to the land." But how? One way is *via* good roads, although some prefer railroading! To have Good Roads Everywhere throughout these United States will mean more to this nation than any other development since our Declaration of Independence. During all ages it has been of primary importance to provide a people with means of intercommunication. People, like water, must move or stagnate. They must run and play like the brook itself or become sluggish and dull—to themselves as well as to others. Of the seven modes of intercommunication—water, roads, post, railroad, telegraph, telephone, and wireless—only one, roads, is free to all the people of the earth. Roads are the most universally used and are therefore the most beneficial to the greatest number of people. The importance of Good Roads Everywhere is paramount—their benefits are all-embracing.

There are 18,000,000 children who endeavor to attend school. There are over 30,000,000 who should attend school. Why don't they? Largely because during much of the school term a considerable part of the 2,000,000 miles of our roads is impassable. This is shown by the fact that only nine-tenths of one per cent (0.9%) of the urban white population of the United States of native parentage is illiterate, while rural illiteracy is six hundred per cent greater in the same class of inhabitants. How can we have or get good schools in the rural districts if we have not the good roads to reach them at all times and in all seasons? If we do not have good schools, and illiteracy results, then we help—in the best possible way—the growth of the criminal classes.

The relation of good and bad roads to illiteracy, and thus to crime, is indicated by the following table:

	Native White of Native Parentage Total Population (1910)	Per cent Improved Roads (1909)	Per cent of Illiterate Native Whites of Native Parentage (1910)		
			Total	Urban	Rural
New England: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut	<u>2,135,801</u> 6,552,681	22.2	0.7	0.5	1.2
South Atlantic: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida	<u>5,397,864</u> 12,194,895	6.7	8.0	2.2	9.8
Pacific: Washington, Oregon, California	<u>1,684,658</u> 4,192,304	14.2	0.4	0.3	0.6
West South Central: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas	<u>4,101,510</u> 8,784,534	2.6	5.6	1.4	6.8

This table does not of course include foreign-born, native-born of foreign parentage, or negroes, all of whom are ex-

cluded for obvious reasons. Illiteracy is eleven times greater in the South Atlantic States than in New England, while the percentage of improved roads (such as they are) is less than one-third. Similar figures for the Pacific and West South Central are: fourteen times greater illiteracy, while the percentage of improved roads is less than one-fifth as much. The excess of illiteracy in rural over urban New England is only one hundred and forty per cent, while in the South Atlantic States this excess is nearly four hundred per cent, due to the lower percentage of improved roads. This difference is slightly greater in comparing the other two groups in the table.

The children of today are the electors, the representatives, the senators, the judges, one of them the President, of tomorrow. The population is increasing by leaps and bounds. If education means liberty, and if poor roads mean illiteracy or worse, have we a right *not* to build good roads, even if they would not pay for themselves well within the generation which builds them?

To-day we have preventive medicine. Instead of waiting to cure people of disease we are bending every effort to prevent disease. Why not profit thereby? Crime is a crime? Idleness more than any other one thing produces moral deterioration and crime. The building of "Good Roads Everywhere" by the nation, the state, the county and the town will give constant employment to the army of unemployed. This will tend to prevent crime if we apply it rightly.

What better thing than to employ those temporarily withdrawn from our society, in the building of "Good Roads Everywhere?" Such a policy will be of vast economic advantage to the nation. It will give brawn, brain and heart to those most needing it. It will give them freedom of mind and body. It will give them inspiration, hope. Tear down our prison walls, and rear no more, for they are festering places for our fellow beings. Let us no longer go back on those of our own mold! Let us rather, from now on, give our "pals" a "square deal!" We can be sure they will answer in kind!